

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1768

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: MASS, PF, US, JO, IS

SUBJ: WADI ARABA AND WATER DEVELOPMENT

1. JUNE 25, AMBASSADOR AND AID MISSION DIRECTOR IN COMPANY UNDP REP AND SEVERAL SENIOR JORDANIAN OFFICIALS RESPONSIBLE FOR DEVELOPMENT VISITED LOWER RIFT VALLEY IN COMPANY WITH CROWN PRINCE HASSAN. VISIT AT CROWN PRINCE'S INVITATION, BUT CONNECTED WITH HIS EARLIER REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE IN DEVELOPING A REGIONAL PLAN FOR WADI ARABA BROACHED TO AHERTON AND SAUNDERS DURING PRESIDENT'S VISIT. POST WILL BE SENDING SEPARATE CABLE TO AID PROVIDING OUTLINE OF OUR REACTION TO THIS PROPOSAL AND FOR SUGGESTED MEANS OF IMPLEMENTING A FEASIBILITY STUDY IN THIS AREA WHICH WE BELIEVE WOULD BE VERY WORTHWHILE AND OF HIGH VALUE TO JORDAN.

2. IN COURSE OF VISIT, CROWN PRINCE DROVE PARTY TO ISRAELI FRONTIER FENCE IN AREA OF 30 DEGREES 7 MINUTES NORTH AND 35 DEGREES 15 MINUTES EAST WHERE JORDANIANS CLAIM ISRAELIS UNILATERALLY MOVED FENCE 8 KILOMETERS EASTWARD A YEAR AND A HALF AGO. ABOVE HAS BEEN SUBJECT OF NUMBER OF MIXED ARMISTICE MISSION COMPLAINTS AND DO NOT INTEND TO GO INTO IT HERE. HOWEVER, IN THIS CONNECTION JORDANIANS ARE AWARE OF FACT THAT ISRAELIS HAVE DONE CONSIDERABLE HYDROLOGICAL WORK ON WEST EDGE OF WADI ARABA AND BELIEVE THEY OPERATE A

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CHAIN OF PUMPING STATIONS IN THAT AREA TO SUPPLY

WATER TO FARMS AND HOUSING AREAS. CROWN PRINCE ASKED IF WE COULD POSSIBLY BE HELPFUL IN SOLICITING FROM ISRAELIS INFORMATION ON HOW THEY HAVE ORGANIZED THEIR OWN IRRIGATION AND WATER SUPPLY EFFORTS IN THE WADI ARABA AND FOR ANY BASIC HYDROLOGICAL DATA WHICH THEY MIGHT HAVE DEVELOPED. HE SAID WOULD BE INTERESTED IN WHAT THEIR PUMPING STATIONS DOING. JORDANIANS FACE A PRINCIPAL PROBLEM OF EXPLORING HYDROLOGY IN AREA OF WADI SOUTH OF DEAD SEA AND NORTH OF DEVELOPED ROAD IN VICINITY OF 30 DEGREES 5 MINUTES NORTH AND 35 DEGREES 10 MINUTES EAST. ISRAELI DATA WOULD OBVIOUSLY BE OF CONSIDERABLE VALUE IN EXPEDITING THEIR WORK IF IT COVERS AVAILABILITY OF UNDERGROUND WATER IN WADI BOTTOM.

3. REQUEST IS OBVIOUSLY ONE WHICH RAISES NUMBER OF SENSITIVE ISSUES, BUT WOULD DO MUCH, IF RESPONDED TO POSITIVELY, TO CONTRIBUTE TO A MORE COOPERATIVE AND HELPFUL JORDANIAN-ISRAELI RELATIONSHIP. TO BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE THIS IS FIRST REQUEST OF THIS CHARACTER WHICH WE HAVE HAD FOR EXCHANGE OF DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION.

4. WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR EMBASSY TEL AVIV'S VIEWS ON THE POSSIBILITY OF SOLICITING SUCH INFORMATION FROM ISRAELIS FOR EXCHANGE IN WHATEVER WAY MIGHT BE CONSIDERED BEST FROM POINT OF VIEW OF BOTH JORDAN AND ISRAEL. OBVIOUSLY DEPARTMENT'S REACTIONS TO THIS SUGGESTION AND ITS GUIDANCE BE CONTROLLING. I HAVE MERELY TOLD CROWN PRINCE WE WOULD LOOK INTO MATTER AND LET HIM KNOW WHETHER WE COULD BE HELPFUL OR NOT.
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